

REMARKS

Claims 8-34, 50-51, 53-92, 118-119, 159-162, and 178-194 were pending in the present application. Claims 8-21, 50, 51, 53-92, and 178-194 are allowed. By virtue of this response, claims 159-162, 183, and 184 have been cancelled, claims 9, 10, 23, 24, 31, and 118 have been amended, and new claim 195 has been added. Accordingly, claims 8-21, 50, 51, 53-92, 178-182, and 185-195 are currently under consideration. Support for new claim 195 is found in the specification on, *inter alia*, page 55, line 30 to page 56, line 2; and original claim 11.

With respect to all amendments and cancelled claims, Applicant has not dedicated or abandoned any unclaimed subject matter and moreover has not acquiesced to any rejections and/or objections made by the Patent Office. Applicant reserves the right to pursue prosecution of any presently excluded claim embodiments in future continuation and/or divisional application.

Applicants thank the Examiner for withdrawing rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and §103(a), and acknowledging that claims 8-34, 50, 51, 53-92, 118, 119, 159-162 and 178-194 are free of the prior art except as indicated in the double patenting rejection and are allowable.

Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement

A supplemental Information Disclosure Statement is filed under a separate cover. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner consider the references and initial the form 1449.

Nonstatutory Double Patenting Rejections

The Office has provisionally rejected claims 22-34, 118, 119, and 159-162 under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as allegedly being unpatentable over claims 126 and 159-162 of allowed U.S. Patent Application No. 09/526,333, issued as U.S. Pat. No. 6,566,118.

Without acquiescence to the rejection and in the interest of expediting prosecution, Applicants note that a terminal disclaimer over U.S. Pat. No. 6,566,118 is filed with this amendment. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 118 is provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as allegedly being unpatentable over claims 117 and 118 of co-pending application No. 10/020482.

Without acquiescence to the rejection and in the interest of expediting prosecution, Applicants note that a terminal disclaimer over U.S. Appl. Ser. No. 10/020482 is filed with this amendment. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.

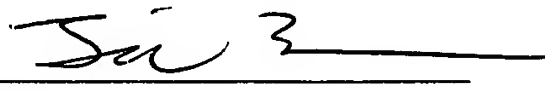
In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue. If it is determined that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

CONCLUSION

In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicant petitions for any required relief including extensions of time and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing docket no.226272003310. However, the Commissioner is not authorized to charge the cost of the issue fee to the Deposit Account.

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Respectfully submitted,

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